

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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R 191452Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7504

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

RUDKRP AMEMBASSY PRAGUE 2394

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUCHAREST 2108

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, RO, US

SUBJ: BURTICA'S VIEWS ON SONNENFELDT CONTROVERSY, US-
GOR RELATIONS.

REF: (A) BUCHAREST 1994; (B) BUCHAREST 2043

1. ON APRIL 16 AMBASSADOR SOUGHT TO CONVINCE CORNEL BURTICA (PARTY SECRETARY FOR IDEOLOGY AND PROPAGANDA, RCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE POLEXCO MEMBER, AND AUTHOR OF DEFINITIVE GOR POSITION ON SONNENFELDT (REFTEL A)) THAT NEITHER US NOR ROMANIA HAD ANYTHING TO GAIN BY CONTINUED CONTROVERSY. AS RESULT EXTENSIVE PUBLIC COMMENT BY PRESIDENT, SECRETARY AND COUNSELOR AS WELL AS HIS OWN EFFORTS IN RECENT DAYS, AMBASSADOR SAID HE ASSUMED GOR (AND BURTICA) NOW THOROUGHLY UNDERSTOOD US POLICY ON EASTERN EUROPE.

2. BURTICA'S REPLY FOLLOWED LINES OF HIS ARTICLE AND MACOVESCU'S, ANDREI'S AND GLIGA'S COMMENTS PREVIOUSLY.

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BURTICA SAID IDEAS MADE PUBLIC OF "SOME DEPARTMENT OF STATE

OFFICIALS" HAD INTRODUCED "NEGATIVE ELEMENTS" WHICH "HAMPERED" US-ROMANIAN RELATIONS. GOR (CEAUSESCU SPECIFICALLY, HE SAID) APPRECIATED AND UNDERSTOOD WHAT PRESIDENT FORD HAD SAID SUBSEQUENTLY, AND BASIC PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING RELATIONS WERE NOT IN QUESTION. SAYING THINGS IN SECRET AT LONDON, HOWEVER, AND NOT RPT NOT THEN DENYING THEM RANKLED GOR.

3. BURTICA ITEMIZED "INADMISSIBLE ELEMENTS" AS (1) PHRASE "ORGANIC RELATIONSHIP IN EASTERN EUROPE"; (2) PATRONIZING WAY POLAND, YUGOSLAVIA, HUNGARY, AND ROMANIA HAD BEEN DESCRIBED AND COMPARED; (3) TERM "GEOPOLITICAL SPACE" WHICH SMACKED OF "SPHERES OF INFLUENCE".

4. CONTINUING AND HEAVY PRESS PLAY HAD MADE MATTERS EVEN WORSE: LE MONDE HAS JUST ANALYZED KISSINGER-SONNENFELDT THESIS AS FEAR THAT TOO MUCH INDEPENDENCE IN EASTERN EUROPE MIGHT LEAD TO DISORDER OR WAR; SMALL COUNTRIES WERE TREATED LIKE "UNRULY CHILDREN" WHO NEEDED KEEPER. BURTICA DISAGREED: SMALL NATIONS NOT POSSESSING GREAT MIGHT HAD TO COMPENSATE BY WILE AND WISDOM AND WERE OFTEN MORE RESPONSIBLE THAN GREAT POWERS.

5. BURTICA PARTICULARLY OBJECTED TO HOW SONNENFELDT HAD DESCRIBED ROMANIA'S INTERNAL SITUATION BECAUSE IT IMPLIED GOR DID NOT KNOW WHAT IT WAS DOING. INTERNAL POLICY OF GOR HAD TO BE SHAPED IN PART BY CONSIDERATIONS OUTSIDE ROMANIA. "RIGID, LESS DARING AND INNOVATIVE" (SONNENFELDT'S PHRASE) HAD STRUCK BURTICA AS "DISAPPOINTINGLY SIMPLISTIC" FOR A MAN OF SONNENFELDT'S REPUTED PERCEPTIVENESS. GOR CAN'T ALWAYS DO EVERYTHING IT MIGHT WANT AND CEAUSESCU'S EXPERIMENTS IN DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM WERE WITHIN THE REALM OF THE POSSIBLE.

6. BURTICA STRESSED THAT SMALL STATES WERE MUCH MORE SENSITIVE THAN LARGER ONES. ROMANIA'S HISTORY WAS ONE LONG BITTER FIGHT TO SURVIVE. SONNENFELDT'S REMARKS WERE "VERY, VERY DANGEROUS" TO ROMANIA, ESPECIALLY AFTER HELSINKI ACT, AND HARKED BACK TO "OLDER-TYPE" STRATEGIES.

7. GOR HAD CONCLUDED THAT FACT OF SCHMIDT AND CHIRAC
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TAKING DISTANCE FROM USG'S APPROACH TO ISSUE OF INDEPENDENT COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN WESTERN GOVERNMENT, FOR EXAMPLE, WAS INDICATION SOMETHING IN USG'S POLICY WAS OUT OF KILTER. OVERBLOWING THAT ISSUE WORKED AGAINST THE US INTERESTS. GOR, HE REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES, DESIRED GOOD RELATIONS WITH USG BUT ONLY ON BASIS OF PRINCIPLES HE HAD REITERATED IN SCINTEIA.

8. AMBASSADOR SAID HE SAW NO GREAT ADVANTAGE AT THIS STAGE IN GOING INTO DETAILED COMMENTARIES ON SPECIFIC SECTION OF TEXT, ALTHOUGH BURTICA SHOULD KNOW WELL THAT THE PRIME CHARACTERISTIC OF US POLICY TOWARD EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN RECENT YEARS HAD BEEN ONE OF TREATING THEM NOT AS MERE ADJUNCTS OF THE SOVIET UNION BUT AS FULLY SOVEREIGN STATES WHOSE INDEPENDENCE WE SUPPORTED AND ENCOURAGED. AMBASSADOR THEN ASKED HOW WOULD ROMANIA WISH USG TO MANIFEST THE SUPPORT FOR ITS INDEPENDENCE WHICH SONNENFELDT HAD IN FACT CLEARLY SET OUT. BURTICA SAID ROMANIA NEEDED NO RPT NO "SPECIAL SINGLING OUT" OR CALLS FOR "INDEPENDENCE OF SOCIALIST COUNTRIES". NEEDED MORE WAS USG SUPPORT OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AS PRINCIPLE, EVERYWHERE, WITHOUT EXCEPTIONS. "EXCESSIVE PUBLIC CONCERN" SHOWN BY SONNENFELDT REMARKS AND "TOO MUCH OSTENTATION" PROVOKES AND IRRITATES SOVIETS. PRESIDENT FORD HAD HIT THE RIGHT NOTE AT MILWAUKEE. ROMANIA WANTS FULL EQUALITY AND MUTUAL RESPECT FROM USG PLUS ACTIVE COLLABORATION IN ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL FIELDS AND CLOSE POLITICAL CONSULTATION. IT DOES NOT SEEK CHARITY, SPECIAL FAVORS, OR SECOND-CLASS, PATRONIZING RELATIONS. AND ABOVE ALL, NO "DANGEROUS SPHERES-OF-INFLUENCE DOCTRINES". ROMANIA'S INDEPENDENCE WAS DIRECTED AT NO ONE, NEITHER US NOR USSR; BUT ROMANIA OPPOSES "SOCIALIST IMPERIALISM" JUST AS MUCH AS OLDER VARIETY. ROMANIAN-STYLE INDEPENDENCE MIGHT COST A LITTLE MORE BUT IT WAS THE ONLY WAY ROMANIA COULD DEVELOP.

9. ROMANIA HAD LONG OPPOSED "SPECIAL PRIVILEGES" OF LARGER POWERS, BURTICA SAID. HE CITED UN ENEMY-STATUS CLAUSE HANGING "LIKE A DAMOCLES SWORD" OVER ROMANIA AND OTHER STATES AND OTHER "ANACHRONISTIC FEATURES" OF UN

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7505
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUCHAREST 2108

CHARTER WHICH GREAT POWERS WERE PRESSURING OTHERS TO RETAIN. ALSO, "PREFERENTIAL CONSULTATION" (AS AT PARIS, BETWEEN A CHOSEN FEW DEVELOPED AND SUB-DEVELOPED STATES) "CREATED SUSPICIONS". ROMANIA FELT BLOCS AND GREAT-POWER RIVALRIES, AS IN MIDDLE EAST, WERE DANGEROUS, AS WAS SPIRALING ARMS RACE. USSR AND US COULD SERVE HUMANITY BETTER BY WITHDRAWING A BIT AND MINDING THEIR OWN INTERNAL PROBLEMS MORE, OF WHICH THEY HAD PLENTY.

10. AMBASSADOR NOTED ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR'S PRESS CONFERENCE IN HELSINKI DENOUNCING "SONNENFELDT DOCTRINE" AND ASKED IF THIS MEANT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A LARGE-SCALE CAMPAIGN. IF SO THAT WOULD NOT HELP AT ALL. BURTICA SAID HE HAD GIVEN ORDER TO PRESS NOT TO REPRINT OR ELABORATE UPON HIS SCINTEIA ARTICLE AND NOT TO GENERATE AN ANTI-US CAMPAIGN. HE HAD ALSO DECLINED SUGGESTION THAT HE WRITE FOLLOW-UP ANTICLE. BUT GOR WOULD WATCH DEBATE CLOSELY AND WOULD RESERVE RIGHT TO RESPOND TO ANY MORE SUCH IDEAS IF THEY SURFACED. GOR WANTED TO CLOSE OUT INCIDENT, AND HOPED ROMANIAN POSI-CONFIDENTIAL

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TION WOULD NOT HAVE AGAIN TO BE RAISED SO PUBLICLY.

11. BURTICA ADDED THAT ROMANIA WAS PLANNING WIDE AND SYMPATHETIC RECOGNITION OF US BICENTENNIAL, WHOSE PRINCIPLES OF NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE DEPARTMENT OF STATE MIGHT WELL AGAIN MEDITATE UPON. HE HOPED HE WOULD HAVE A CHANCE SOME TIME TO ASK SONNENFELDT FACE-TO-FACE, AS HE HAD VIA HIS ARTICLE, ABOUT HOW AMERICA'S FOUNDING FATHERS WOULD HAVE REACTED TO THE SORT OF ADVICE SONNENFELDT HAD IN MIND FOR EASTERN EUROPE.

12. TURNING TO AN EMBOFF'S PREVIOUS REMARK TO STEFAN VOICU (CHIEF EDITOR, ERA SOCIALISTA) THAT ANTI-AMERICAN ROMANIAN MEDIA OUTPUT HAD SHOWN SLIGHT INCREASE SINCE DECEMBER, BURTICA DENIED THIS SHARPLY. HE HAD DONE A COUNT: 314 PRESS NOTICES HAD BEEN FAVORABLE, WHILE ONLY 100 (MOST TAKEN FROM US PRESS ITSELF) WERE WHOLLY OR IN PART NEGATIVE DURING PERIOD.

13. BURTICA COUNTERCLAIMED THAT RADIO FREE EUROPE (RFE) IN RECENT MONTHS HAD "GREATLY INTENSIFIED" ITS "HOSTILE BROADCASTING". THIS HAD SURPRISED GOR, IN VIEW OF AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO BETTER RELATIONS WITH ROMANIA. GOR DID NOT UNDERSTAND WHY USG PAID RFE TO CONTINUE ATTACKS NOT ONLY ON GOR POLICIES BUT ON CEAUSESCU HIMSELF AND OTHER GOR OFFICIALS. ALL MEMBERS OF THE RCP CC'S POLITICAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ARE PROVIDED WITH DAILY EXCERPTS OF WHAT RFE SAYS, BURTICA CLAIMED. RFE'S RECORD WAS "BAD" AND DID USG NO CREDIT. GOR HAD CAREFULLY REFRAINED FROM FOLLOWING SIMILAR APPROACH. HE WONDERED WHY RFE COULDN'T ACT RESPONSIBLY LIKE VOA.

14. AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT US WAS IN FAVOR OF WIDEST POSSIBLE FLOW OF INFORMATION AND WE UNDERSTAND THE HELSINKI AGREEMENT TO FAVOR THE SAME. IN ADDITION HE HAD OPPOSITE IMPRESSION FROM BURTICA, NAMELY THAT RFE HAD CONSPICUOUSLY REFRAINED FROM AD HOMINEM ATTACKS SUCH AS HAD OCCURRED DURING COLD WAR.

15. AMBASSADOR AND BURTICA AGREED THAT IT MIGHT SERVE TO CLEAR THE AIR IF PLLITICAL COUNSELOR GOT TOGETHER WITH RCP
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CENTRAL COMMITTEE PRESS DEPUTY CHIEF-OF-SECTION TEODOR MARINESCU TO COMPARE NOTES: GOR COULD SPECIFY EXAMPLES ABOUT RFE, AND EMBASSY COULD DO SAME FOR PRESS-MEDIA SECTOR COVERAGE OF US.
BARNES

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